2: Milosz S-5 (no date)1953 El Europe
Baltic Countries RR2

foreigners (changing their names, if necessary) vote, represent, and rule.

Thus the inhabitants of the Baltic states became Soviet citizens. In the eyes of the new authorities this mass of people, who were so well off that they put the rest of the Union to shame, represented a scandalous relic of the past. They had to be educated. Prisons filled and, shortly, certain categories of citizens began to be deported to work camps, mines, and collective farms at the other end of Russia, chiefly in the polar regions. In 1941 the entire area was invaded by the German army. The Nazis, in turn, started to kill off that category of the population which their ideology classified as undesirable, namely the Jews, irrespective of age, sex, or class. To that task they applied their usual precision. At the same time they exported to the Reich a large number of forcibly enlisted workers.

In 1944 the Baltic states were recaptured by the Red Army and the Center set out to assimilate this area into the Union. The most urgent task was the destruction of the existing and wealthy farming economy. Collectivization met with considerable obstacles, however. The usual method, that of "intensifying the class struggle in the village," which speculates upon the antagonism between rich and poor farmers, had feeble results. Training in partisan units, together with the large number of arms left from war-time operations, encouraged opposition. Peasants fled to the woods and formed bands. In reprisal, disciplinary expeditions surrounded villages and killed those who had remained at home. This merely increased the opposition; for whole villages, including women and children, often preferred to join the partisans rather than expose themselves to the danger of being taken hostage.

The hostile attitude of these people forced those in power to resort to radical measures. Big man-hunts were

[Moscow--Analyst]

2: Milosz S-5 (no date)1953 El Europe
Baltic Countries RBL

instituted. Thousands of cattle-cars loaded with people moved towards uninhabited areas of Euro-Asia. The years in which Western Europe began to enjoy a precarious peace were far from peaceful for the Baltic countries. Villages whose inhabitants were dead, deported, or in hiding stood plundered and empty. The wind whistled through the apertures of broken windows and smashed doors. "Hitlers come and go, but nations remain," the Generalissimo declared in the moment when victory over Germany was certain. As far as smaller national groups are concerned, this statement should be amended to read: "Nations come and go, but the countries remain." In the words of an official of the Center, spoken in 1946: "There will be a Lithuania; but there will be no Lithuanians."

I do not know how many thousands of men and women these states lost before their economies were "reconstructed," i.e. before 1950. Perhaps no one knows the exact statistics. The number of foreign settlers ordered to the places left by the departed natives might serve as an index. Moreover, the process is not yet finished. Collective farmers have been imported into the rural areas; administrative cadres and their families, into the cities. In the streets one hears Russian spoken more frequently than Estonian, Latvian, or Lithuanian. The great majority of the Party leaders and higher government officials have Russian names.

The aim of all these moves is to inter-mix the population of the Union. Only by dissolving individual nationalities in the "Russian sea" can one attain the goal of a single culture and a single universal language. The territory that once linked the Baltic states with Germany has been settled by Russians. The city of Koenigsberg, within whose walls Kant was born and spent his entire life, has been renamed Kaliningrad and there is no longer any trace of the

2: Milosz S-5 (no date) 1953 EI Europe
Baltic Countries RBL

mild, orderly world the philosopher knew. On the islands lying off the coast of what was once Estonia, no Estonian fishermen push their boats toward the sea. The pot in which the Baltic peoples are being boiled down has its lid tightly clamped on. Obviously schools and universities, as well as books, all use native tongues. After all, the aim is not to destroy individual nationalities; the aim is to destroy the class enemy. When the young people learn in Lithuanian, Latvian, or Estonian how to be true patriots of the Union, and how to appreciate all that emanates from the Center, then the Russian language will triumph over all competition. At that point, a new level of understanding will be attained.*

What cause is there for anger? The little world that was the Baltic states is known to us from Breughel's country scenes: hands clutching jugs, cheeks red with laughter, heavy, bear-like kindness. There lived peasant virtues: industry, thrift, diligence; and peasant sins: greed, stinginess, constant worry about the future. The proletariat scarcely existed; industry was poorly developed; the agrarian reform had divided the large estates among the peasants. But why should this continue? Kulaks were an unforgivable anachronism. They had to be wiped out, and

* "I approached Stalin's portrait, took it off the wall, placed it on the table and, resting my head on my hands, I gazed and meditated. What should I do? The Leader's face, as always so serene, his eyes so clear-sighted, they penetrate into the distance. It seems that his penetrating look pierces my little room and goes out to embrace the entire globe. I do not know how I would appear to anyone looking at me at this moment. But with my every fibre, every nerve, every drop of blood I feel that, at this moment, nothing exists in this entire world but this dear and beloved face. What should I do?

"The Soviet government handles the enemies of the people with a firm hand. . . .

"These are thy words, comrade Stalin. I believe them sacredly. Now I know how to act."

From *Pergale* (Victory) magazine, organ of the Soviet Writers of the Lithuanian SSR, No. 4, April 1950, p. 52, cf. *The Lithuanian Bulletin*, New York, Nos. 7–12, July–December, 1950